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## INTERNATIONAL

## Indians brace for 'genocide week'

Year after Golden Temple attack, Sikh extremists still not under control

By Mary Anne Weaver  
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New Delhi

A year after the Indian Army stormed the holiest Sikh shrine to weed out extremists, India this week has been braced for a wave of Sikh violence to avenge the 1,200 deaths that resulted from the battle.

The Indian Army was placed on highest alert in New Delhi and a number of north Indian states and the country's borders with Pakistan were sealed. In Punjab State alone, where Sikhs are in the majority, some 100,000 military and security forces were deployed.

So began "genocide week," called by Sikh leaders to honor the men and women who "defended" the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab, against the Army assault June 3, 1984. At time of writing no violence had been reported.

With Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi leaving tomorrow for official visits to Egypt, France, Switzerland, Algeria, and the United States, hundreds of Indian security officials have taken up positions abroad. Indian authorities have expressed fear that the network of Sikh terrorism, once confined to Punjab, now has international links.

Militant Sikh underground groups such as the Dal Khalsa, the Babbar Khalsa, and the Dashmesh Regiment have reportedly expanded considerably in Europe, Canada, and the US. Recent events have dispelled any notion that the Sikh extremist movement has been broken or brought under control:

- A well-coordinated series of nearly 40 bomb blasts in northern India, killing 89 people last month.
- The arrest in New Orleans last month of a group of Sikhs who allegedly planned to assassinate Mr. Gandhi.
- Reports from Paris of expected terrorist activity when Gandhi visits the Paris Air Show this week.
- The recent arrest of six alleged Sikh extremists, all carrying arms, as they crossed the border from Pakistan.

Three men have been charged with masterminding the Delhi blasts: Mohinder Singh Oberoi, a timber merchant, Kartar Singh Narang, a tax attorney, and a shadowy man who went by the name of Mohinder Singh Khalsa.

All are members of the Dal Khalsa, which works in small cells of six to 10 men who hit their targets then escape underground. The group has branches in Britain, West Germany, and the US.

Authorities are trying to find out whether the New Delhi bombings and the would-be assassins in New Orleans were coordinated by a central directorate. Thus far, officials have met with limited success.

According to the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, which uncovered the assassination plot, evidence suggests that the plan to kill Gandhi during his US visit was masterminded in Canada.

Four of the five Sikhs now in custody in the US were

illegal immigrants who probably entered the country from Canada, according to the FBI. Sikh magazines published abroad have reported that the militant Sikh organizations in Canada are now operating a number of military training camps.

Both the FBI and Indian authorities face a variety of militant groups, whose purposes range from propaganda to terrorism, with cross-membership in some.

The death during interrogation in New Delhi of the man known as Mohinder Singh Khalsa, whose photograph had long been on India's most-wanted list, was a severe setback to the investigation, authorities concede. Mr. Khalsa, a follower of the late militant Sikh leader, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, was the only non-resident of New Delhi charged with the May bombings. Khalsa is considered to have been the crucial link between the Delhi network and a command center in northern India believed to be operating out of Punjab and the border state of Kashmir.

But less than 24 hours after his arrest at Mr. Narang's New Delhi home — which police claim had been converted into a factory to assemble bombs — Khalsa died from his wounds.

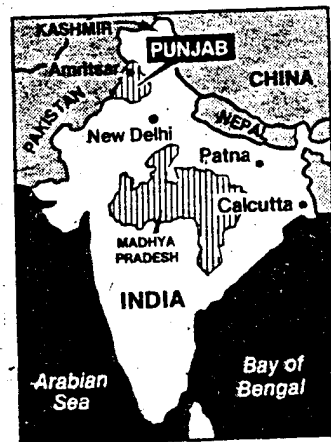
Since then a second suspect has died in police custody — allegedly a suicide.

Mohinder Singh Oberoi, the timber merchant, like Khalsa, had evaded a police dragnet for the past 18 months. He is ostensibly living a quiet underground life, under the name of Gyan Singh, a psalmist at a Delhi Sikh temple where, after chanting the scriptures, he is charged with distributing explosives and bombs.

Mr. Oberoi, according to sources close to the investigation, had been a frequent visitor to the Golden Temple before last year's raid. The sources say Oberoi's alleged New Delhi command structure of approximately 40 men consisted largely of the "Children of Bhindranwale" — those young Sikhs in their 20s, radicalized by the Golden Temple assault, by the anti-Sikh riots following Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination last October, and by the nationwide roundup and reported beating by the security forces of thousands of young Sikh men.

Thirty-three of Oberoi's team are now in police custody and others are being sought, including three prime suspects who are believed to be underground.

Initially, the north Indian bomb blasts appeared to be



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a random burst of cruelty, aimed solely at killing and injuring as many as possible. But then a pattern emerged: The bombs, which exploded every few minutes, appeared intentionally timed to cause maximum confusion among the police, and all of them occurred in areas which were believed to have figured in the anti-Sikh riots in November, in which more than 2,700 died.

Slum colonies from which the rioters were believed to have been drawn were relentlessly hit, as were buses of the Delhi Transport Corporation and trains. (Unionized bus drivers and conductors were believed to have come out in large numbers during the anti-Sikh mayhem.)

Authorities are thus bracing for yet another wave of bombing in Calcutta, Patna, and cities of Madhya Pradesh State, where anti-Sikh rioting killed hundreds.

The authorities concede that so far they have only broken one cell of a labyrinthine network, and that the intelligence agencies have no idea who actually masterminded the bombings.

Particularly unsettling is a growing concern that the extremists have infiltrated the national police and intelligence bureaus, as they clearly have done in Punjab.

Baffled, bewildered, and clearly frightened, the government drew up a sweeping anti-terrorist bill, which Parliament quickly passed last month, which gives the executive almost unlimited power to fight Sikh militants.

The bill, which will be in effect for the next two years, considerably enlarges the definition of terrorism. It applies to Indian citizens abroad and is applicable not only to offenders but to anyone advocating or abetting an offense. The maximum sentence, to be handed down by "special" in camera courts, is death for any actions which have caused a death.